

REMARKS

This Amendment, submitted in reply to the Office Action dated May 19, 2004, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 17-30 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 17-22, and 24-30 have been allowed. Claim 23 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Imamura.

Rejection of claim 23 under § 103 as being unpatentable over Imamura

The Examiner asserts that Imamura teaches a thermal transfer sheet in which the image layer can contain organic pigment and amorphous organic polymer (polyvinyl butyral) in an amount of 30/70 to 70/30% wt and that the thickness of the image layer can be in the range of .2 to 1.5 μm , citing col. 6, lines 41-46, col. 11, lines 30, 62-63 and col. 13, lines 1-8 and col. 14, lines 8-10 in support. The Examiner reasons that since Imamura can employ the same amorphous organic polymer as claimed, it is inherent that the polymer has the same softening point as claimed.

Claim 23 recites:

A thermal transfer sheet wherein an amount of an organic pigment and an amorphous organic polymer having a softening point in the range of 40-150°C included in an image formation layer is 30 to 70% by weight, and 70 to 30% by weight respectively, and the thickness thereof is in the range of 0.2 to 1.5 μm .

Imamura col. 6, lines 41-46 describes an image transfer sheet including a support sheet, a light-heat conversion layer and an image formation layer. Col. 11, lines 30, 62 and 63 of

Imamura describes a heat-sensitive releasing layer containing a heat-sensitive material such as a polymer or a low-molecular weight compound and that a portion of decomposed or broken heat sensitive material of the releasing layer may be transferred to the image receiving sheet together with the image-wise transferred image formation layer. Col. 13, lines 1-8 describes thermoplastic binders such as butyral resin and acrylic polymers having a molecular weight of 5,000 to 100,000. Col. 14, lines 8-10 describes that the thickness of the image formation layer varies depending on the purpose of the transfer sheet and generally the thickness does not exceed $10\mu\text{m}$ and is in the range of .1 to $1.5\mu\text{m}$.

However, at no point does Imamura disclose a transfer sheet comprising an organic pigment **and** an amorphous organic polymer, that the softening point of the organic polymer has a softening point in the range of 40-150°C, that the organic pigment and an amorphous organic polymer is 30 to 70% by weight, and 70 to 30% by weight respectively, **and** the thickness thereof is in the range of 0.2 to $1.5\mu\text{m}$, as recited in claim 23. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 23 is not obvious in view of Imamura and should be deemed allowable.

Allowed Claims

The Examiner indicates that claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 17-22 and 24-30 are allowed because upon reconsideration, “the data in Table 1 in applicant’s specification demonstrates that unexpected results are obtained with organic pigments having a melting point not less than 315°.” Applicant submits that the scope of the claims should be governed by the actual claim language and not by the Examiner’s reasons for allowance.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Appln. No.: 09/859,461

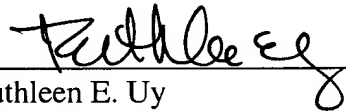
Attorney Docket No.: Q64426

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Ruthleen E. Uy
Registration No. 51,361

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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